

## TO WORRY THEY SAY "SHOO!"

And so the Don't Worry Circles Are Getting Happy.

Eva Petty in New York Sun.

There is one thing that comes to every human, being just as surely as death; that is worry. The average person looks upon death as a necessary evil, except when somebody else does the dying; he views worry much in the same light, never stopping to think that worry is a master of his own choosing. There are a lot of people in this city who are fighting worry with all their mental, moral, and spiritual strength, and they hope in time to drive it off the face of the earth. They are the members of the various Don't Worry Circles, and their ranks are filling up every day with new recruits. There are already seven circles in working order and others will be organized within a month.

The idea grew out of a little book entitled "Don't Worry; or Spiritual Emancipation the Scientific Law of Happiness" Theodore F. Seward of Brooklyn is the author, and it is said that he evolved his theories from personal experience, for he is a great man to worry about things that never happen. Mr. Seward is an active member of one of the circles and takes a lively interest in all. The first circle was organized on Nov. 8 at the home of Miss Andrews, who is greatly interested in mental science. A few days later Don't Worry Circle No. 2 was formed by Dr. John Hamlin Dewey, conductor of the School of the Higher Life, at his home, 117 West Eighty-fourth street. This circle takes the place of a mid-week meeting with Unity Congregation, of which the Rev. Hugh O. Pentecost is pastor. The third circle was organized at Judge Cowing's house and now meets in St. James Episcopal Church in Madison avenue. There is also a circle in connection with the Metropolitan Independent Church, of which the Rev. Henry Frank is pastor, and one called the Circle of Divine Ministry at 67 Irving place.

Don't Worry Circle No. 2 is one of the most prosperous and is a fair type of all the others. The Rev. Hugh O. Pentecost conducts the meetings. When asked to tell about the workings, aims, and success of the circle he said:

"Don't Worry Circle No. 2 is a very thriving one. As soon as it was established by Dr. Dewey, Unity Congregation, which holds its church services in Carnegie Music Hall, adopted its exercises as its mid-week meeting, instead of a regulation prayer or praise meeting. We already had the Don't Worry in Unity Congregation, for in one of our congregational prayers we express a desire to be free from anger, worry and fear, and a desire for ability to rid ourselves of a mind which sees only the dark side of life. Already in our circle we have a membership of about 100, and it is increasing at the rate of five or six weekly. As we hold our meetings in private houses, we have about as many as we can manage in this circle; so other circles will be formed to accommodate the new comers.

"There is no real organization in any of the Don't Worry circles. We elected by common consent a Treasurer and Secretary. There is no regular President, though some one takes the lead just to start things off. We take up a collection to pay for sending out notices of meetings, and so on. All our meetings have been and will continue to be very informal. I see to it that some one opens each meeting with a talk or paper on some subject relating to the don't worry idea. To give an idea of the trend these talks I'd like to say that H. L. Wilson, editor of Puck, read a very excellent paper on 'How Not to Worry.' He was the very man to handle that subject, for I never knew a person who lives in such absolute mental peace as he does. The Rev. J. M. Scott, a Unitarian minister, talked to us at one meeting about the 'Don't Worry Idea as Taught by Buddha.' I talked about the 'Don't Worry Doctrine as Taught by Socrates.' At another meeting Dr. Dewey made a really remarkable discourse on 'Unfailing Health and Perpetual Youth' and at our last meeting Mrs. A. D. Sturdevant read a paper prepared by Dr. Denmore, who is in Europe, on, 'Power Through Repose.' C. V. Patterson, one of the editors of the magazine Mind, also gave us a fine talk.

"After the introductory talk or paper everything is open. You ask if any of the members has received any real benefit from the meetings? Some say that when they joined the circle the worry habit was so much a part of them that they were miserable and that they have been greatly benefited by the meetings. These Don't Worry circles are absolutely free from bigotry. The atheist is just as welcome as the old lady who saddles off all of her worries on her Saviour.

"Our object is to enable people of all sorts, conditions, and beliefs to apprehend how to be relieved from worry,

fear, and anger. The atmosphere of the circles is one of cheer and health and no one can fail to be benefited except a hopeless pessimist. It is a very helpful place to go, and anybody who wants to shake off the worry habit is made welcome. We try to get rid of all pretenses in our meetings, and urge people not to say that they do worry if they do. Every meeting takes a different turn. There is absolutely no control exercised over it; it runs its own way. Of times it takes an abstract question, and another time the whole evening is devoted to personal experiences.

"At a recent meeting a man appeared who had never been there before. He was a man who had been in years and he got up and said he had heard of the Don't Worry circles and thought he'd come to see if he could find a way to keep from worrying. He went on to tell that he owned city real estate valued at \$200,000 and that he worried all the time for fear that he should lose it. I'd like \$200,000 mighty well, but I wouldn't take it as a gift from that man if I had to take his feeling of fear with it, and I believe that all the other members of our circle felt the same way. He was convinced at that first meeting that money, when it brought anything but happiness, was more of a curse than a blessing. He has been attending the meetings ever since and has come here to have several long talks with me, and he is winning a victory over worry, for now he only feels that fear of losing his property part of the time.

"Another man got up at a meeting, and to illustrate how he feels that worry is an essential quality of human nature, told the following story: 'I own a handsome place out in Orange, where I lived for some time. Whenever it rained the cellar was flooded, and of course that worried me no end. Finally I found that it would be more convenient for me to live in the city, so I rented my Orange house.

"Shortly after I was comfortably settled in town and had my tenants also comfortably fixed, a heavy three days' rain set in. After it had been coming down for a day I began to worry about the cellar out in Orange. The longer it rained the more I worried. I could see the water creeping up inch by inch until finally the house was submerged in my mind, the walls ready to fall, and the tenants packing up to move away, with a very poor opinion of me. At last I could stand it no longer, and after two days and nights of utter wretchedness I went out to Orange. For some time I didn't dare face the people in my house, but finally I plucked up courage and rang the doorbell. The lady answered it herself, and was as smiling as a May morning. 'How's the cellar?' I managed to gasp. 'As dry as a bone,' she answered sweetly. 'As soon as we came here my husband saw that by laying a pipe in a certain way all of the water could be carried off and the cellar kept perfectly free from dampness.' Now, how was I to keep from worrying about that cellar? he appealed to the circle, pathetically.

"You ought to have been able to go to Orange, find your cellar full of water, and still not worry," retorted a bright member, and she was right. Worry, you know, wouldn't bail the water out of a cellar.

"It is perfectly astonishing," continued Mr. Pentecost, "how much opposition there is to the idea of not worrying. The belief prevails that civilization progresses through people's worrying. That is false, for the worry habit retards the growth of the individual, and whatever does that retards civilization. The don't worry idea is the basis of all the religions in the world. That is what religion was established for, to teach people not to worry. Jesus said, 'Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, neither for the body, what ye shall put on. By that he meant for us not to worry about things. Buddha sat under a tree, ate his little dish of dry rice, and told the people not to worry.

"The Don't Worry Circle opens itself to attack, but the Don't Worry people do not mind that. The cartoonist and the paragoner can have all the fun out of these circles that they please. We do not worry over their pictures or humorous squibs in the least, but really enjoy them.

"People outside of the circles often ask, 'How can the habit of worrying be conquered?' They seem by their tone to resent the very idea. It cannot be done without resolute and persevering individual effort. With such effort the habit certainly can be mastered, for in this day of reason more people than we know of live in perfect mental peace. One person gets rid of the worry habit in one way and another in an entirely different way. If you can get rid of the habit by worshipping a fetish, worship the fetish. Some people can only get rid of their worries by taking them to the Lord, as they say. That's the right track for them. Others of us rid ourselves of the habit by a mental process, and that's the right way for us. Mr. Seward has laid

down a few rules in his book which, if intelligently observed, will cause the habit to lose its power, and he says quietness and peace will take the place of the feverish anxiety, the undercurrent of restless feeling which robs the human heart of its natural happiness and raises the question so often heard, whether life is worth living. The rules for conquering the worry habit are:

1. Realize it is an enemy which destroys your happiness.
2. Realize that it can be cured by persistent effort.
3. Attack it indefinitely as something to be overcome.
4. Realize that it never has done and never can do the least good. It wastes vitality and impairs the mental faculties.
5. Consider what must be involved in the truth that God is infinite and that you are a part of His plan.
6. Memorize some of the Scripture promises and recall them when the temptation to worry returns.
7. Help and comfort your neighbor.

8. Forgive your enemies and conquer your aversions.

9. Induce others to begin the work of emancipation from the worry habit.

"Mr. Seward goes on to say. 'It will be observed that the first six rules refer to efforts we are to make for ourselves, and the last three concern our relations to others. The last rule is by no means the least important. No emancipation can be complete which does not seek to include the neighbor. The habit of worrying is so universal and so deep-seated that, aside from the struggles with our own natural temperament, there is the added difficulty of resisting the atmosphere of anxiety by which American life is pervaded. The greater the number of our friends and neighbors we can persuade to make the effort with us the more rapid and substantial will be our own individual progress. There are two reasons for this: Giving expression to an idea emphasizes and confirms it in our own minds, committing ourselves to others increases our sense of responsibility, and we are, therefore, more likely to be faithful to the purpose we have expressed whatever it may be.'

"The don't worry reform," concluded Mr. Pentecost, "touches life on all sides. We consider the work accomplished by the circle connected with Unity Congregation far more effective than any work we could accomplish by holding the regulation mid-week service. Our membership is not limited to members of the congregation. People of all creeds are asked to join, for the watchword of Unity Congregation is freedom, fellowship, and peace in religion. However, all of the Don't Worry circles in the city are open to all interested, and they are doing and will continue to do a grand work."

In speaking of the folly of worrying the author of "Don't Worry" gives some practical advice. He says:

"Worrying is the most unreasonable habit in which a human being can indulge. The truth of this proposition can be shown by simply asking two questions: 1. Does worrying increase our happiness? The idea is too absurd to be considered. Worrying occasions more unhappiness than any other cause—perhaps more than all other causes combined. 2. Does worry help us in our work? However important the crisis that lies before us, are we prepared to meet it any more successfully by carrying a burden of anxious thought about it? This question can have but one answer. No. Our minds are rendered less fit for the coming problem by all the doubts and fears we entertain. The insanity of the habit is strongly emphasized by the fact that many people worry as much over the past as they do over the future. 'If I had only done differently, if I had only avoided this or that mistake, they say, with real anguish of spirit. What folly could be greater than to allow vitality to be wasted and happiness destroyed by that which cannot be recalled, changed, or in the slightest degree modified? We also allow ourselves to be tormented by a thousand forms of fear. We are afraid of catching cold, afraid to eat this or that article of food, afraid that something unpleasant will happen to us. And what we so persistently expect we are very apt to get. The strongest thing about this slavery is that we have come to regard it as unavoidable, an essential element of life, a stimulus that is needed to keep us up to the line of duty.'

Mr. Ward L. Smith, of Fredericks town, Mo., was troubled with chronic diarrhoea for over thirty years. He had become fully satisfied that it was only a question of a short time until he would have to give up. He had been treated by some of the best physicians in Europe and America, but got no permanent relief. One day he picked up a newspaper and chanced to read an advertisement of Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy. He got a bottle of it, the first dose helped him and its continued use cured him. For sale by H. A. L. Gon.

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